

SCOTT TERRILL



SOUTHERN HUMPBACK



# **Southern Humpback**

*Scott Terrill*

**Yet To Be Named Free Press**

Stoke-on-Trent, England

2013

# Southern Humpback – Scott Terrill

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*sand of grain a from volcano A*



# **Southern Humpback**

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southern humpback—  
miles of ocean  
pushing back

young coconut  
beside a wet machete  
her breath

indigo my groin fold against it

moorings slip the mountain the snow falling

Deep in the smell of  
childhood comic books winter rain

how fleeting the night is a seal skin slips into

this way and that  
winter sun  
in a rabbit's ear

etched in names  
etched in stone  
my shadow



blood orange  
a foreigner sips  
his Americano

deep in the Holocene the softening of a diaphragm

## pigment (a study)

Dear Vincent,  
night terrace viridian green cold cold

white ash burning bones bone white

vermillion

wrestlers

falling meadow flowers  
into each others necks

black marks bone black silence

on his belly quiet stains  
the starry sky all over it

blown ochre whispers of an afterlife

still

life

:

*broken chrome yellows*

the day Hiroshima was bombed

cobalt blue squeezed from an ocean turning  
deep blue

in the lamplight  
the bookshop now  
pink and gold

umber where the moth was

at all at all and yet  
I expect to see a fish  
among the irises

not satisfied  
until the last tomato seed  
white chopping board

dreaming in another language  
an oyster dies  
beside an oyster

slipping moon  
a rock pool blooms  
jellyfish

under the verandah  
the marshy shore; a horse  
nibbles at my hand

slicing dried cod  
three days after the tsunami  
soft enough to eat



barnacles  
on the fluke of a whale  
Mount Fuji

at the bottom of the sea  
cosmonauts  
drift blue

snow, I'm piling up fast

as water  
whiteness yanks the winter  
down deep down

not moving  
moving  
a fjord and a fjord and a fjord

contemplating banana leaves  
I close my eyes  
and see dust motes

atomic sky  
a crab follows a gutter  
no nearer the ocean

in a hole  
through birdsong drips  
bougainvillaea



shopping for oysters  
i return  
to find them dead

Beside me  
the weight of the world halved  
by a mushroom.

facing a stone belly  
the lump in my neck  
dispatches                      a baby universe

by the edge of an edge of a sea a wound

Holiday Inn  
a waterfowl plunges headfirst  
into the car park

into my mouth  
sea urchins explode  
and multiply

pressing the front of night white peach

funeral is the sound cut paper



in this fetus, too  
a sculpture  
passing by

old shed—  
he claims 1966  
for a pillow

carousel I step out onto a swan's foot

the length of her scar  
a worker crests a ridge  
of honeycomb

a certain age unrelated to falling mailboxes

**3:08**

I get out of bed and on the laptop check Facebook. The Americans are up, busying themselves on the other side of the world... not much for me though. I turn the computer off. It is dark, silent except for an air-conditioning unit humming in the room somewhere, humming. I quietly make my way to the toilet and urinate. I stare at the stream. It reminds me of a headache. I turn off the light. The digital display on the clock tells me it is 3:08. Angles catch. I notice the led light illuminating two glass bottles and the clear liquid they contain. Both bottles, bedside, one filled with cologne the other aftershave are for the briefest of moments, an instant and a lifetime... It is 3:08

whale voices  
strike an iris  
in the face

hear poppies and shin bones are grown into each other

Japanese blood grass:  
Kokoda winds fade  
to rust



cuttlebone white  
wind culled vowels stretch  
from a thinning hull

vowels of the Southern Ocean  
take it with him  
from a shell of iron

inches below the surface  
a lifeline bending  
the Coral Sea

mangrove and sago  
sometimes I want to be more  
than just a vagina

tongue o' road  
tourists ponder  
retro rocket tech

on top of broken spines the copulation of rhinoceros

to focus eventually this print swimming too will decompose

hula girls dance in blue faded ink the smell of lantana



unable to insert myself into citron yellow lilies I

an can fold the nail into itself

brickworks a smaller happenstance of bone

wallop th' blue  
turning shoulders  
of a raptor

before her death insist I take the cask sherry

between the crocus and daffodil male parts

back wound my blood resounded Poinciana

it will not change its course after the death jellyfish



all along the frost at the beach  
the insides of jellyfish  
are cold

it looks like  
it may hit the jellyfish  
the jellyfish

sun starts to set  
a crayfish backs up  
a right angle

drifting catfish dying then drifting then

after the War  
shooting dead  
all the War horses

staining my underpants  
blackberries I carry home  
when I was seven

caster desk falling axe

in a large field  
a heart that pounds  
butterflies apart



if I must  
I will disarticulate  
if I must  
I will disarticulate

windy tomb  
a G.I. shuffles  
a paper dress

Nanjing Road  
a soy sauce egg  
in my KFC box

vestigial

,

human

## sleep

Breast - feeding pity unfeigned feigning sleep  
the drainage resentful  
the unfeigned stains Breast -  
feeding revolves mongoose Breast -  
feeding picking the scratch the bland the soup  
transition slow  
positive desert/friction Breast -  
feeding pity sleep sleepless Breast -  
feeding 5 Breast -  
feeding whole cities pity sleep the Breast -  
feeding retention resentment maps the rafter  
the pig-wash the inertia  
the Pan cypress Breast -  
feeding 1 dare used to support the bulk the tide  
according to  
the gushing Breast -  
feeding Breast -  
feeding the lintel period of crazy Breast -  
feeding rafters revolve quince Breast -  
feeding unwinding  
pine peg lustre of gems tide  
the tide the tide  
the bland sleep  
the rafters sleep

## **A short play with poor subject matter**

A: Why are you drinking Lambrusco with the vegetable soup?

B: What do you mean, Lambrusco is the perfect complement to a veggie soup.

A: I think it's weird.

B: It's a light table wine, a perfect compliment to many things. For instance, it would be wonderful with bread, cheese and kabana.

A: Well, I asked you if you wanted some kabana today and you said no because you couldn't wait to get out of the shop.

B: That's true, but you should never ask me if I want kabana because you know that I love kabana and I always want kabana.

A: Well, it serves you right.

B: Just buy the kabana. Just buy the kabana ...

A: Stop it!

B: I'm going to put this conversation on facebook.

A: No you are not. You are not to discuss our private lives in public.

C-section

autumn sun tracing

park bench slats


## Publication Credits

Many of the poems in this book were previously published in: *A Hundred Gourds*, *Tinywords*, *Bones*, *Presence*, *The Heron's Nest*, *Issa's Untidy Hut*, *Notes from the Gean*, *Roadrunner*, *Four Virtual Haiku Poets* (YTBNFP, 2012, ISBN 9781478307549), *LYNX* and the *Lakeview International Journal of Literature and Arts* for 2013.









southern humpback—  
miles of ocean  
pushing back

POETRY/  
SHORT VERSE